

REMARKS

Claims 33-36, 42, and 43 have been amended. Claim 32 has been canceled. Claims 17-31 were previously withdrawn. Accordingly, claims 17-31 and 33-45 are presently pending in this application.

In the February 26, 2007 Office Action, claims 32-36 were rejected. More specifically, the status of the application in light of this Office Action is as follows:

(A) Claims 32-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,835,469 to Jones et al. ("Jones");

(B) Claims 42 and 43 were objected to; and

(C) Claims 37-41, 44, and 45 were indicated to be allowable.

Although the undersigned does not concede that claim 31 is anticipated by Jones, in an attempt to expedite prosecution, claim 31 has been canceled.

Claims 42 and 43 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the features of the claim from which they depend. Claims 42 and 43 have been rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, for at least this reason, claims 42 and 43 are in condition for allowance. Amended claims 33-36 depend from claim 43. For at least this reason, claims 33-36 are also in condition for allowance.

Withdrawn independent claim 17 includes features similar to allowed claim 37. For at least this reason, claim 17 is in condition for allowance. Claims 18-23 depend from claim 17. For at least this reason, these claims are also in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the undersigned request that claims 17-23 be rejoined and allowed.

Withdrawn independent claim 24 includes features similar to allowable claim 43. For at least this reason, claim 24 is in condition for allowance. Claims 25-31 depend from claim 24. For at least this reason, these claims are also in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the undersigned request that claims 24-31 be rejoined and allowed.

Although the applicants' attorney agrees with the Examiner's conclusion that claims 37-41 and 42-45 contain allowable subject matter, the applicants' attorney notes that the subject matter may be allowable for reasons other than those identified by the Examiner and does not concede that the Examiner's characterization of the terms of the associated claims and the prior art are correct.

In view of the foregoing, the pending claims comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the applied art. The Applicants accordingly request reconsideration of the application and a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Tim Seeley at (206) 359-6477.

Respectfully submitted,
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